Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims

1-6. (Cancelled)

7. (Currently amended) A method of controlling the use of a weapon, said method including the steps of:

transmitting from an identification unit that is separate from the weapon, ~~a~~an activation signal that comprises an activation code and a continuous signal after the activation code signal is transmitted;

receiving with a receiver attached to the weapon the activation signal and the continuous signal transmitted by the identification unit;

monitoring the signal received by the receiver with a processor attached to the weapon to generate a received signal and, with the processor, placing the weapon in an active state if the received signal includes the activation code signal having the activation code;

after said step of placing the weapon in the active state, with the processor, monitoring the strength of the received signal;

maintaining the weapon in the active state only if the strength of the received signal monitored by the processor is at or above a minimum signal strength, regardless of the frequency of the received signal or the presence/absence of the activation code in the received signal, to avoid a deactivation of the readiness of the weapon to fire by an interfering transmitter, and

inactivating the weapon with the processor if the strength of the received signal falls below the minimum strength.

8. (Currently amended) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 7, wherein:

prior to said steps of transmitting the activation code with the activation code signal and the continuous signal from the identification unit, entering into the identification unit an identification code;

with the identification unit, comparing the entered identification code to a stored identification code stored in the identification unit; and

only if the entered identification code is the same as the stored identification code, performing said steps of transmitting the activation code and the continuous signal from the identification unit.

9. (Previously presented) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 8, wherein, in said step of entering an identification code to the identification unit, the identification unit reads biometric data from an individual.

10. (Previously presented) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 8, wherein, said step of entering an identification code to the identification unit is performed by reading fingerprint data for an individual into the identification unit through a fingerprint reader attached to the identification unit.

11. (Previously presented) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 8, wherein, said step of entering an identification code to the identification unit is performed

by reading fingerprint data for an individual into the identification unit through a CCD fingerprint reader attached to the identification unit.

12. (Currently amended) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 8, wherein:

a ~~strap~~wristband is attached to the identification unit for holding the identification unit to an individual and the identification unit includes a ~~sensor~~switch for indicating if the ~~strap~~wristband is closed; and

the identification unit includes ~~a~~an identification unit processor for performing said step of comparing the entered identification code to the stored identification code and the ~~strap-sensor~~switch is connected to the identification unit processor for actuating the identification unit processor only when the ~~strap~~wristband is closed.

13. (Currently amended) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 8, wherein:

in said steps of transmitting from the identification unit ~~a~~the activation code signal and the continuous signal, and of receiving the signal with the receiver, a radio signal ~~is~~comprises the activation code signal and the continuous signal transmitted by the identification unit and received by the receiver; and

said step of monitoring the strength of the received signal is performed by monitoring the strength of the received radio signal.

14. (Currently amended) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 7, wherein:

in said steps of transmitting from the identification unit ~~a~~the activation code signal and the continuous signal, and of receiving the signal with the receiver, a radio signal

~~is~~comprises the activation code signal and the continuous signal transmitted by the identification unit and received by the receiver; and

said step of monitoring the strength of the received signal is performed by monitoring the strength of the received radio signal.

15. (Currently amended) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 7, wherein, in said steps of transmitting from the identification unit ~~a~~the activation code signal and the continuous signal, and of receiving the signal with the receiver, the transmitted and the received signal ~~is~~are selected from the group consisting of infrared signals and ultrasonic signals.

16. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 7, wherein the weapon is free from a transmitter mounted thereon.

17. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 7, wherein the continuous signal comprises an uncoded signal.

18. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 7, including transmitting a readiness signal from the weapon to the identification unit and displaying the state of readiness of the weapon on the identification unit.

19. (New) A method for controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 7, including the steps of:

providing a wake-up circuit for the receiver attached to the weapon;

activating the receiver when the activation code signal is received by the wake-up circuit; and

besides deactivating the weapon, deactivating the processor when the strength of the received signal falls below the minimum strength.

20. (New) A method for controlling the use of a weapon comprising the steps of:

providing an identification unit that is separate from the weapon, the identification unit including a transmitter, a transmitting antenna connected to the transmitter and an identification device;

providing a module on the weapon comprising a receiver with a receiving antenna and a processor, said module being free from a transmitter;

detecting an authorized user with the identification device to authorize operation of the identification unit;

transmitting from the identification unit using the transmitter and the transmitting antenna, upon detecting an authorized user, an activation code signal including an activation code followed by an uncoded signal;

monitoring with the receiver and the receiving antenna to detect the activation code signal and the uncoded signal;

placing the weapon in an active state upon receipt of the activation code with the activation code signal;

maintaining the weapon in the active state when the received signal is at or above a minimum strength even if at least one of the detected frequency received by the receiving antenna is different from the frequency of the uncoded signal and the activation code signal is not received, the received signal comprising one or more of 1) the activation code signal, 2) the uncoded signal, and 3) another signal from another source; and

deactivating the weapon if the strength of the received signal is less than the minimum strength.

21. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 20, wherein the identification unit comprises a wristband and the identification device comprises a biometric sensing device that detects a pattern of blood vessels on a wearer's wrist.

22. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 20, wherein the uncoded signal comprises an uncoded continuous RF signal and the activation code signal comprises an RF signal.

23. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon Claim 20, the module including a wake-up circuit for the steps of:

activating the processor when the receiver receives the activation code signal, and

deactivating the processor when the received signal has a signal strength less than the minimum signal strength.

24. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 20, wherein the identification unit is integrated into a wristband, and the identification unit includes a switch for indicating if the wristband is closed, the identification unit detecting an authorized user and transmitting the activation code signal followed by the uncoded signal to place and maintain the weapon in the active state only when the wristband is closed.

25. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 20, wherein both the activation code signal and the uncoded signal consist of one of infrared energy and ultrasonic energy.

26. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 20, including the step of displaying the name or the picture of the authorized user on an indicator of the identification unit.

27. (New) The method of controlling the use of a weapon of Claim 20, wherein the method is free from the step of sending any type of signal from the module attached to the weapon to the identification unit.

28. (New) A method for controlling the ability to discharge a weapon comprising the steps of:

providing a weapon with a module that is free from a transmitter, the module including a decision processor, a receiver, and a receiving antenna;

providing an identification unit that is separate from the weapon for securement to a user so that the identification unit is normally within at least two or three meters of the weapon, the identification unit including an identification unit processor, a transmitter, a transmitting antenna connected to the transmitter and an identification device, the identification unit being integrated into a wristband and including a switch for sensing if the wristband is closed;

detecting an authorized user with the identification device to authorize operation of the identification unit and place the weapon in an activated state;

transmitting from the identification unit using the transmitter and the transmitting antenna, upon detecting an authorized user, an activation code signal and an uncoded power signal;

monitoring with the receiver and the receiving antenna to receive the power signal and the activation code to provide a received signal;

placing the weapon in an active state upon receipt of the activation code;

maintaining the weapon in the active state so long as the received signal is at or above a minimum strength even if 1) the detected frequency of the received signal is different from the frequency of the power signal, and/or 2) the activation code is not received, so long as the received signal comprises at least the minimum strength; even if the minimum strength of the received signal results from an interference signal provided by another transmitting source; and

deactivating the weapon if the strength of the received signal is less than the minimum strength,

wherein an interference signal provided to disable the weapon is ineffective.